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The Chinese Cinderella Story

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## THE CHINESE CINDERELLA STORY

THE earliest datable version of the Cinderella story anywhere in the world occurs in a Chinese book written about 850–860 A.D. As this version has hitherto been only very inadequately translated and commented upon,<sup>1</sup> I have thought it worth while to make a fresh translation and to furnish such information as is necessary for a proper understanding of it. I shall also say rather more than is usual in such cases about the book in which the story is preserved and the circumstances under which a Chinese official came to write down a story which was, in fact, not Chinese, but which belonged to certain aborigines in the extreme south of China.

The author of the book in which the story occurs lived from about 800 to 863 A.D. He belonged to an influential family. His father, Tuan Wên-ch'ang, held many high posts both at the Capital and in the provinces, and acquired the reputation of having a special gift for managing the aborigines of the south.<sup>2</sup> He died in 835, while serving as Controller of a large district in Szechwan. His son, Tuan Ch'êng-shih, had two passions: book-collecting and hunting. When the father held a high post in Szechwan, Tuan Ch'êng-shih, who was supposed to be helping his father in his official work, was always away on hunting expeditions. A secretary was sent to explain to him that this sort of thing could not be allowed to continue. Next day a present of pheasants or hares arrived for every member of his father's staff. Along with each present of game was a document recounting some story of former generations connected with the bird or beast in question; and no two recipients got the same story. Thus Tuan Ch'êng-shih proved that his devotion to sport was coupled with a great zest for acquiring out-of-the-way information. He afterwards held various posts at the Capital, was prefect of Chi-chou in Kiangsi, and finally held a position in the T'ai-ch'ang Ssu, the office which arranged the rites connected with imperial ancestor-worship. He wrote a book called *Yu Yang Tsa Tsu*, which might be translated *Miscellany of Forgotten Lore*. It is named after a mountain in Hunan to which some scholars are supposed to have retreated at the time when the wicked Emperor Shih-huang "burnt the books". According to this legend, they brought with them texts which no longer survive anywhere else and the cave where these are stored has

<sup>1</sup> Attention was first called to the Chinese version by the Japanese folklorist K. Minakata in 1911 (*Jinrui Gaku Zasshi*, vol. xxvi). See also R. D. Jameson, *Three Lectures on Chinese Folklore*, 1932

<sup>2</sup> See *Hsin T'ang Shu*, 89, fol. 10.

sometimes been explored by adventurous travellers, who have come back with a store of out-of-the-way information.

The book shows a great interest in foreign things. There is a section on foreign plants, perfumes, etc., which was much used by Laufer in his book on Persian products imported into China. There are also many foreign stories—Korean, Persian, Turkic, Indian and Central Asiatic. He appears to give these stories just as they were told to him, without any attempt to adapt them to Chinese taste or ideas. The stories he tells deal almost exclusively with the supernatural. Some of them he quotes from books, others he got orally (and in such cases he often names his informant); occasionally he draws on his own experience. But the strange things actually witnessed by Tuan were not half so strange as those that he reports as having happened to his friends or to friends of his friends. His interest in such stories is of quite a different kind from that of modern European folklorists. He knows nothing of our fads, such as "matriarchy", rites of passage, sun myths or the like. He is grieved, not thrilled, by intriguing instances of wide diffusion. Thus <sup>3</sup> when he finds that a story commonly told about an 8th century alchemist had previously been told in Benares about an Indian alchemist, he merely regards the later story as false information about the Chinese alchemist Ku Hsüan-chi, <sup>4</sup> and warns his readers against accepting it, in a section of his book specially devoted to the correction of current mistakes.

Tuan, in fact, values the strange stories he tells not as literature nor as exotic samples of human fantasy, but as contributions to our knowledge of the hidden powers and influences that are all the time at work behind the stolid façade of everyday existence.

His Cinderella story <sup>5</sup> runs as follows :

Among the people of the south there is a tradition that before the Ch'in and Han dynasties there was a cave-master called Wu. The aborigines called the place the Wu cave. He married two wives. One wife died. She had a daughter called Yeh-hsien, who from childhood was intelligent and good at making pottery on the wheel. Her father loved her. After some years the father died, and she was ill-treated by her step-mother, who always made her collect firewood in dangerous places and draw water from deep pools. She once got a fish about two inches long, with red fins and golden eyes. She put it into a bowl of water. It grew bigger every

<sup>3</sup> *Yu-yang Tsa Tsu*, Supplement IV, 8.

<sup>4</sup> Another and better-known version of the story has been translated by Professor Edwards in her *Prose Literature of the T'ang Dynasty*, vol. ii, p. 54

<sup>5</sup> *Yu Yang Tsa Tsu*, Part II, 1, 2.

day, and after she had changed the bowl several times she could find no bowl big enough for it, so she threw it into the back pond. Whatever food was left over from meals she put into the water to feed it. When she came to the pond, the fish always exposed its head and pillowed it on the bank; but when anyone else came, it did not come out. The step-mother knew about this, but when she watched for it, it did not once appear. So she tricked the girl, saying, "Haven't you worked hard! I am going to give you a new dress." She then made the girl change out of her tattered clothing. Afterwards she sent her to get water from another spring and reckoning that it was several hundred leagues, the step-mother at her leisure put on her daughter's clothes, hid a sharp blade up her sleeve, and went to the pond. She called to the fish. The fish at once put its head out, and she chopped it off and killed it. The fish was now more than ten feet long. She served it up and it tasted twice as good as an ordinary fish. She hid the bones under the dung-hill. Next day, when the girl came to the pond, no fish appeared. She howled with grief in the open countryside, and suddenly there appeared a man with his hair loose over his shoulders and coarse clothes. He came down from the sky. He consoled her, saying, "Don't howl! Your step-mother has killed the fish and its bones are under the dung. You go back, take the fish's bones and hide them in your room. Whatever you want, you have only to pray to them for it. It is bound to be granted." The girl followed his advice, and was able to provide herself with gold, pearls, dresses and food whenever she wanted them.

When the time came for the cave-festival, the step-mother went, leaving the girl to keep watch over the fruit-trees in the garden. She waited till the step-mother was some way off, and then went herself, wearing a cloak of stuff spun from kingfisher feathers and shoes of gold. Her step-sister recognized her and said to the step-mother, "That's very like my sister." The step-mother suspected the same thing. The girl was aware of this and went away in such a hurry that she lost one shoe. It was picked up by one of the people of the cave. When the step-mother got home, she found the girl asleep, with her arms round one of the trees in the garden, and thought no more about it.

This cave was near to an island in the sea. On this island was a kingdom called T'o-han. Its soldiers had subdued twenty or thirty other islands and it had a coast-line of several thousand leagues. The cave-man sold the shoe in T'o-han, and the ruler of T'o-han got it. He told those about him to put it on; but it was an inch too small even for the one among them that had the smallest foot. He ordered all the women in his

kingdom to try it on ; but there was not one that it fitted. It was light as down and made no noise even when treading on stone. The king of T'o-han thought the cave-man had got it unlawfully. He put him in prison and tortured him, but did not end by finding out where it had come from. So he threw it down at the wayside. Then they went everywhere<sup>6</sup> through all the people's houses and arrested them. If there was a woman's shoe, they arrested them and told the king of T'o-han. He thought it strange, searched the inner-rooms and found Yeh-hsien. He made her put on the shoe, and it was true.

Yeh-hsien then came forward, wearing her cloak spun from halcyon feathers and her shoes. She was as beautiful as a heavenly being. She now began to render service to the king, and he took the fish-bones and Yeh-hsien, and brought them back to his country.

The step-mother and step-sister were shortly afterwards struck by flying stones, and died. The cave people were sorry for them and buried them in a stone-pit, which was called the Tomb of the Distressed Women. The men of the cave made mating-offerings there ; any girl they prayed for there, they got. The king of T'o-han, when he got back to his kingdom made Yeh-hsien his chief wife. The first year the king was very greedy and by his prayers to the fish-bones got treasures and jade without limit. Next year, there was no response, so the king buried the fish-bones on the sea-shore. He covered them with a hundred bushels of pearls and bordered them with gold. Later there was a mutiny of some soldiers who had been conscripted and their general opened (the hiding-place) in order to make better provision for his army. One night they (the bones) were washed away by the tide.

This story was told me by Li Shih-yüan, who has been in the service of my family a long while. He was himself originally a man from the caves of Yung-chou and remembers many strange things of the South.

It is evident that certain passages in this story need comment or explanation. I will deal with them in the order in which they occur. We are told that the events of the story took place "before the Han and Ch'in dynasties". This is merely a way of saying "in the good old days" before the Chinese conquest of Hsi-yüan, the area with which the story deals. And here a slight digression is necessary. We must turn to the end of the story, where it is said that it was told to the author by an old family servant who was himself "a man from the caves of Yung-chou". Yung-chou corresponds to the modern Nan-ning, in the province of Kwangsi, about 100 miles north of the frontiers of Annam. It lay in a district that

<sup>6</sup> Something here seems to have gone slightly wrong with the text.

in the 9th century was called Hsi-yüan and the New T'ang History <sup>7</sup> has a whole section devoted to the "aborigines of Hsi-yüan". In our story, Cinderella's father is referred to as a "cave-owner", and the aborigines of this district are described <sup>8</sup> by another T'ang writer in 821 as "living in precipitous places on the mountain side" and "calling themselves cave-owners". It is possible that in the 9th century they still lived chiefly in caves. But in Sung times (10th to 13th centuries) "cave" had come simply to mean "native settlement". The Sung History <sup>9</sup> enumerates eleven "caves" ("native settlements") near Nan-ning. It is evident from the story that Cinderella lived in a house, not a cave, and that the term "cave-owner" is applied to her father in an ethnic, not a literal, sense. We are told that his surname was Wu, and this was a well-known name in those parts. In 759 A.D. the poet Yüan Chieh, some of whose poems I translated in 170 *Chinese Poems*, was prefect of Tao-chou, which lay just north of the district with which we are here concerned. The town was besieged by rebellious aborigines, one of whose leaders was called Wu Kung-ts'ao. He had, that is to say, the same surname as the cave-owner Wu of our story, and was at the head of the Hsi-yüan aborigines, whom he brought up from further south. Wu Kung-ts'ao was eventually captured alive and the rebellion was suppressed. There is little doubt that it was to this same Wu family that Cinderella belonged.

The next point that arrests our attention is the statement that Cinderella's father had two wives. Chinese, of course, could only have one wife, though they might have several concubines. Some modern aborigines of southern China have more than one wife if they can afford to; but it is not clear in this story whether the father had two wives at once or merely took a second wife after the first died.

I do not think we can extract any information from Yeh-hsien's name, which is written with Chinese characters meaning Leaf Limit. It certainly does not look like a Chinese girl's name. The contemporary pronunciation would have been something like Zyap-han. Unfortunately we do not know what language the Hsi-yüan aborigines spoke,<sup>10</sup> and consequently we cannot etymologize her name.

Yeh-hsien's skill in pottery<sup>11</sup> is another non-Chinese trait. Pottery is usually regarded in China as man's work. Modern writers, both Chinese and European, about aborigines in this part of China are curiously silent

<sup>7</sup> 222, C., fol. 19.

<sup>8</sup> *Works of Han Yü*, ch. 40.

<sup>9</sup> 90, fol. 6.

<sup>10</sup> The modern aborigines of Kwangsi belong chiefly, I think, to the Yao-speaking group. Yao is connected with Miao. Both have been affected by Tai, of which Siamese is a southern form.

<sup>11</sup> I follow the reading *t'ao chün*, "pottery on the wheel".

about their pottery; if pottery were still women's work they would probably have noted it.

In connection with Yeh-hsien's fish, it is worth noting that in the Annamite and Sham versions there is a fishing competition between the two sisters. In some modern Chinese versions the friendly animal is a cow, which is a re-incarnation of Cinderella's mother.

The "festival" of this story corresponds of course to the ball of our English Cinderella story. The great festival of many of the aborigines in southern China took place in the spring.<sup>12</sup> Among the aborigines of Kwangsi, however, it happened at the beginning of the Chinese tenth month (i.e. round about December 1st).<sup>13</sup> It is a ceremony of ancestor-worship and at the same time a mating-festival.

We next come to the shoe, which is indeed the turning-point of all true Cinderella stories. One might regard the mention of shoes as a non-primitive trait. It is unlikely that the Hsi-yüan aborigines usually wore shoes, their modern counterparts certainly do not. But the moderns do use straw sandals on ceremonial occasions; such sandals are, for example, described as part of the outfit of the shaman.<sup>14</sup> The fact that shoes were not generally worn would have made the story additionally impressive. Moreover, they were "gold shoes". This was perhaps rather less impressive to the natives of those parts than to us. Hsi-yüan was an important gold-mining centre. The *History of the Sung Dynasty*<sup>15</sup> gives the situation of a number of gold-mines in this neighbourhood, and the modern aborigines were apparently still wearing gold ornaments late in the 19th century,<sup>16</sup> though this does not seem to be the case to-day.<sup>17</sup>

In our story Cinderella marries the king of T'o-han. I do not think there is any doubt that this is the T'o-huan (a transcription of something like Tavan) of the T'ang histories.<sup>18</sup> This was an Indianized kingdom on

<sup>12</sup> As also in Annam. See Nguyen Van Huyen: *Les Chants Alternés des Garçons et des Filles en Annam*, Paris, 1934. The book also deals with Southern China.

<sup>13</sup> See Wei Chu-t'ing, *Liang-yüeh Yao Su Chi* ("Customs of the Yao in Kwangtung and Kwangsi"), early 19th century? The passage in question is accessible in the Basic Sinological Series collection of "Old Stories".

<sup>14</sup> See Shên Yüeh-lin, *Yüeh-hsi So Chi*, Fang Hu Chai geographical series VII, 180, circa 1800 A.D.?

<sup>15</sup> 90 fol. 6. There was a gold mine quite near to Nan-ning, where the servant who told the story came from.

<sup>16</sup> See Archibald Colquhoun, *Across Chryse*, II, iii. He notes the absence of gold ornaments in Yünnan, as contrasted with the provinces (Kwangtung and Kwangsi) that he had just come from.

<sup>17</sup> See Hsü I-tang: *Costume and Ornaments of the Kwangsi*, Yao. Nanking Journal, vi, 2, 1936.

<sup>18</sup> *Old T'ang History*, 197, fol. 2. *New T'ang History*, 222, C. fol. 4. "Tavan" may have been short for Jetavana, the name of a famous garden where Buddha preached. Indianized kingdoms in S.E. Asia often took Buddhistic names.

an island off the northern shore of the Gulf of Siam, politically dependent upon the great Mon kingdom of Dvaravati,<sup>19</sup> which occupied the central part of what is now Siam. The story of course reads as though the kingdom of T'o-han were on an island off the coast of Kwangsi or Kwangtung, quite close to Cinderella's "cave". But T'o-han is obviously the transcription of a foreign word; and in any case there was never a great island kingdom off the coast of southern China.<sup>20</sup> This leads us to the conclusion that the story in its present form did not originate with the natives of Kwangsi, who had no "kingdom of T'o-han" lying off their shores, but with the people of Dvaravati, who had as their close neighbour an island kingdom called T'o-huan. Whether the story came by sea to Canton or by land through Cambodia and Annam we do not know.

You will remember that at the point where Cinderella is identified as the owner of the shoe, something has gone slightly wrong with the text. It seems, however, that the king must have ordered his servants to put the shoe at the wayside and watch to see if anyone came to take it. Apparently Yeh-hsien came and took the shoe, was followed and seen to go into a certain house, where she was duly discovered and identified.

The "robe of halcyon-feathers" of course at once reminds us of swan-maiden stories. But it is important to note that for the teller of the story a robe of feathers did not necessarily have mythical connotations. We are told, for example, by a 17th century writer<sup>21</sup> that some of the aborigines in Kwangtung and Kwangsi wore robes made of goose-feather and leaves. Again, when the story says that Cinderella looked "beautiful as a heavenly person", we are once more reminded of the swan-maiden motif, for in the Japanese Nō play, *The Robe of Feathers (Hagoromo)*, which deals with a typical "swan-maiden" theme, it is this exact expression "heavenly person", written as here, that is used to describe the heavenly visitor whose robe of feathers is stolen by the fisherman. There is, however, a possibility that the term "heavenly person" in our story refers to a special institution of the Kwangsi natives; for we are told by an 18th

<sup>19</sup> See H. Quaritch Wales, *Towards Angkor*, 1937. Dvaravati was founded by Mon-speaking people (perhaps ruling over Tai subjects) about 550. Its capital may have been at Nakon Pathom in the N.W. corner of the Gulf of Siam. It was conquered by the Khmer about 1000 A.D. The people were Hinayana Buddhists. Inscriptions in Pali and in Mon have been found, but Quaritch Wales says (p.131), "We do not know the name of a single king nor do we know of a single event in the history of the kingdom of Dvaravati."

<sup>20</sup> Hainan is the one important island off the coast of S.E. China. There is no reason to suppose that there was ever a great kingdom there.

<sup>21</sup> Lu Tz'u-yün (c. 1658-1720), in his *Tung-ch'i Hsien Chih* (Hsiao Fang Hu Chai geographical series viii, 57.)



century writer<sup>22</sup> that among some of them (the T'ung),<sup>23</sup> the chief's "daughter" is called "the Heavenly Lady" and that it is her business to counter the magic of sorceresses. It is not, however, certain that the term "heavenly person" refers in our story to any such institution. It is quite a natural one in Chinese and to Tuan Ch'êng-shih, who wrote the story down, it would certainly have suggested a Buddhist Angel (*apsaras*), such as those that are often to be seen swooping down from the sky, more or less head first, their draperies all a-flutter, in Buddhist paintings and on Buddhist stone-reliefs.

The episode in which the step-mother and step-sister are struck by flying stones reminds one of the flying stone motif in Chinese poltergeist stories.<sup>24</sup> It may perhaps turn out to be a general rule that when, as here, hostile phantasies are expressed in a story, they can go to extremes; the stones actually kill the objects of the aggrieved girl's hostility; but when similar hostility is expressed not in a story but in concrete tricks and manipulations, as in poltergeist phenomena, it stops short of killing. Poltergeists in China (and I think elsewhere) are mischievous and destructive but not homicidal.

The next episode comes as rather a shock, demanding as it does a complete shift in the reader's sympathies. The spirits of the two wicked persecutors become dispensers of love-magic. To us it seems that a fragment of cult-origin myth has been arbitrarily inserted in the story, though in the minds of the aborigines there may well have been connections that are not apparent to us. The tomb of the step-mother and step-sister was called "The Tomb of the Distressed Women". The word used for "distressed" (*ao*) is a rather unexpected one, and I wonder whether there has not been a confusion with the Yao word *ao*, which means "two".<sup>25</sup> A "tomb of the two women" was one of the sights of Kweilin, capital of Kwangsi in the 9th century. It was a considerable tumulus, apparently some 500 yards in circumference.<sup>26</sup> It too was associated with a step-child story, for the Two Women were the two wives of the mythical Chinese emperor Shun, who was maltreated by but triumphed over his step-relatives. It seems likely that the tumulus which the aborigines associated with the

<sup>22</sup> T'an Ts'ui (flourished c. 1775) in his *Shuo Man* (same series, viii, 65).

<sup>23</sup> Written "dog" at the side of "boy".

<sup>24</sup> A good poltergeist story will be found in vol. ii of *Chinese Prose Literature of the T'ang Period* (by Professor E. D. Edwards, 1938), p. 271. The source of trouble is a servant-girl aged about 15, as is the case in other similar Chinese stories.

<sup>25</sup> *A Yao Dialect in Ling-yun, Kwangsi*, by Li Fang-kuei, Academia Sinica, History and Philology, 1930.

<sup>26</sup> See Mo Hsiu-fu, *Kuei-lin Fêng-t'u Chi*, fol. 1.

Cinderella story was connected by the Chinese with their own favourite step-child story. The story ends with a reference to the narrator, an old family servant called Li Shih-yüan, who was an aborigine from Nan-ning in Kwangsi. A disaster, which may have some bearing on how Li came into Tuan Ch'êng-shih's service, befell the aborigines in 821. The local military commander asked the Government for support in carrying out a large-scale campaign against the Hsi-yüan aborigines. And here another famous Chinese writer comes on to the scene. Han Yü (768-824 A.D.) sent a petition to the Throne opposing the expedition. He said the aborigines gave no trouble when left alone: "only when in danger do they band together in self-defence. . . . They live in caves or behind earth-works in wild and remote places. Even if we completely exterminated them and took over their land, in what way would our own national interests be forwarded?"<sup>27</sup> He hinted that the commander was merely looking for an easy way of getting the rewards (lands, money, titles, etc.) always accorded to leaders of successful campaigns. The petition was ignored, and in the autumn of 821 the aborigines were heavily defeated. Li Shih-yüan may have been the son of an aborigine captured in this campaign and bought as a slave by Tuan Ch'êng-shih's father. Slaves and servants in general were great disseminators of stories.

*How stories circulated.*

There was of course an upward and a downward process. Folk-stories reached the upper classes through servants (as in the present case), through wet-nurses, who were peasant women, and through singing girls. Literate upper-class people, if they were struck by a story, often wrote it down. The return journey (from the upper classes to the people) was, I think, very largely facilitated by the drama. Dramatists used the stories that literary people had written down and officials gave dramatic performances, to which the common people were admitted, on birthdays, at weddings and for other purposes, such as to aid navigation.<sup>28</sup> So the peasants finally got their stories back again in a new form, and such stories (though they might have passed through every phase of literary treatment and dramatization) were still believed in as current happenings, and might at any moment be related as having happened recently in the next village. As another story, that of the White Snake, is a better example of diffusion than *Cinderella*, which never, so far as I know, was made into

<sup>27</sup> Han Yü, *Works*, 40.

<sup>28</sup> In 1738 the level of the Grand Canal sank and some transport barges got stuck. The scene where Jade Lotus, heroine of the 14th century drama, *The Thorn Hairpin*, throws herself into the river, was played in order to appease the river spirit. (See Chi Yün's *Yüeh-wei-is'ao-t'ang Pi-chi*, xv, 4.)

a ballad or a play, I will make a short digression concerning the history of the White Snake theme.

There are two T'ang stories about a man who meets a lovely lady dressed in white. He marries her and at last discovers to his horror that she is a white snake. In the first half of the 16th century a similar story was being told by the blind story-teller T'ao Chên, as an original legend of the Thunder Peak Pagoda near Hangchow, the Capital of Chekiang.<sup>29</sup> In the first half of the 18th century it was retold in a literary form; this is the version of which I published a translation in *Horizon* (August, 1946). In the second half of the 18th century the story was staged as *The Thunder Peak Pagoda* and has ever since been a favourite subject of plays. It was also the subject of a long narrative ballad and of a shadow play.<sup>30</sup> Finally came, at the beginning of the 19th century, a longish novel on the subject translated in 1834 by Stanislas Julien, under the title *Les Deux Couleuvres-Fées*.

But despite all these literary versions, a 19th century author<sup>31</sup> tells as an actual occurrence (c. 1730), the story of a poor man from a village near Huchow (north of Hangchow) whose wife by her business acumen made him one of the richest men in the neighbourhood. But on the 5th of the 5th month she always hid herself, and it was discovered that on this day she was not a woman, but a snake. The village schoolmaster advised the husband (who was apparently unperturbed by the discovery) that snake-wives eventually brought ill-luck. The snake-woman resented the schoolmaster's interference and that night she disappeared and was never seen again.

This is manifestly an echo of the stage-play, but it is an unconscious one, and the literary theme is well on its way towards being a folk-theme again.

### *The modern Chinese Versions of Cinderella.*

I have not had access in the original to any of the current stories. One of them is translated in Eberhard's *Chinese Fairy Tales* (p. 17). Except for the step-child situation and the slipper-motif, it has very little resemblance to the T'ang story. Eberhard also refers briefly in his *Typen Chinesischer Volksmärchen* (p. 52) to a number of other current oral versions. Where the provenance is known they all seem to come from near

<sup>29</sup> See Aoki Seiji, *Shina Kinsei Gikyoku Shi*, p. 678. W. Eberhard in *Typen Chinesischer Volksmärchen*, p. 51, says there was a snake-cult in Chekiang, but gives no particulars.

<sup>30</sup> W. Grube, *Chinesische Schattenspiele*, vol. ii, p. 1.

<sup>31</sup> Ch'ien Yung in his *Li Yüan Ts'ung Hua*, p. 220.

Canton, that is to say from the same part of China as the T'ang version. An example from Shantung in the north "contains only one of the motifs"; Eberhard does not say which. But Professor R. D. Jameson speaks of "the oral versions I have found in the north".<sup>32</sup> Unfortunately he tells us nothing about them. Until the folk-stories of China have been more completely collected it would be rash to assert that the story belongs at present particularly to the extreme south of China.

It is not, however, the purpose of this paper to discuss either the distribution or the origin of the story. I have merely tried to put the T'ang version, the earliest datable version known to us, at the disposal of folklorists, paying rather more attention than is usual to the narrator and to the writer-down of the story.

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## APPENDIX

### *Other foreign stories recorded by Tuan Ch'êng-shih*

#### 1. *A Korean Story.*

The Chin family is the noblest lineage in Silla (a kingdom in south-eastern Korea). One of its members, Chin Ko, says that he had a remote ancestor called P'ang I. P'ang I had a younger brother who was very rich; but the brothers lived separately and the elder brother P'ang I had to beg for his clothing and food. So one of the people of the country gave him a piece of spare land, an acre in extent, and he then asked his younger brother to give him silkworm-eggs and grain-seed. The younger brother boiled them before giving them to him; but P'ang I did not know of this. When the silkworm season came, only one egg hatched, somewhat over an inch long. In ten days it was as big as a cow. It ate the leaves of several trees and still had not enough. As the days went by the silkworms from a hundred leagues round came flying to settle near P'ang I's house. People called it the giant silkworm and said it was the king of the silkworms. All the neighbours came and pulled silk from it.

(The younger brother, knowing of this, waited for an opportunity and killed the silkworm.)<sup>33</sup>

Of the corn, only one stalk grew. Its ears were more than a foot long. P'ang I watched over it all the time; but suddenly it was broken off by a bird that carried it off in its beak. P'ang I followed the bird up a mountain for five or six leagues. The bird flew into a crevice in the rocks. The sun had set and it was now quite dark; so he stayed beside the rock. At midnight, the moon shone and he saw a lot of little boys dressed in red

<sup>32</sup> *Three Lectures on Chinese Folklore*, Peking, 1932, p. 60.

<sup>33</sup> This sentence has become displaced in the text.

playing together. One little boy said, "What thing would you like?" Another said, "I should like some wine." The first little boy then brought out a golden awl and struck the rock with it, whereupon wine and cups were both provided. Another said, "I want something to eat." He struck again, whereupon cakes, soup and broiled meat ranged themselves on top of the rock. When they had eaten and drunk for some time, they scattered, having first put the golden awl into a crevice in the rock. In great delight P'ang I took the awl and went home. By striking with it he got everything he wanted. In this way he became as rich as the most powerful man of the land. He often supplied his younger brother with pearls, and the younger brother began to regret the trick that he had played on P'ang I in the matter of the silkworms and corn. However, he said to P'ang I, "Try that trick about the silkworms and corn on me. Perhaps I shall then get a golden awl like yours." P'ang I thought this silly and remonstrated with him. But it was no good; so he did as his brother asked. From the eggs the brother only got one silkworm, of the usual size. From the corn-seed he only got one stalk that grew. It was almost ripe when it too was carried off by a bird. The brother was delighted and followed the bird into the mountain. At the place where the bird went into (a crack), he met a lot of demons. They were very angry and said, "This is the man who stole our golden awl." They then seized the brother and said to him, "Would you rather build us a wall of chaff three *pan* (about 20 English feet) high or have a nose ten feet long?" The brother said he would rather build the wall of chaff. For three days he toiled, with nothing to eat. But he had no success, and at last begged the demons to have mercy on him. But they pulled his nose, and it became as long as an elephant's trunk. When he went home, the people of the land were amazed and gathered round to stare at him. He was so embarrassed that he died. Afterwards one of (P'ang I's) descendants for a joke struck with the awl and asked for wolf's dung. At this, thunder rolled, the earth shook and the awl disappeared.

## 2. *Turkic Story.*

The ancestor of the Turks was Shê-mo. The lake-spirit Shê-li displayed his divinity to the west of the cave called A-shih-tê. To Shê-mo a divine wonder happened; every day at dusk the lake-spirit's daughter sent a white deer to fetch him. Shê-mo went with it into the lake; at dawn it escorted him out (of the water). This went on for twenty or thirty years. One night when the tribe was going to have a great hunt, the lake-spirit ('s daughter) said to Shê-mo, "To-morrow during the hunt

a white deer with golden horns will come out of the cave where your ancestors were born. If your arrow hits this deer's wondrous form you will be able to go on visiting me. But if you do not hit the deer, it is all over between us."

When day came and he entered the beater's ring a white deer with gold horns did indeed start up in the birth-cave. Shê-mo told his servants to make the ring secure ; but just as the deer was bounding out, one of the beaters killed it. Shê-mo was angry and with his own hand slew the head-man A-jo and as he did so swore, saying, " For ever afterwards, now that this (deer) has been killed, there must be human sacrifices offered up to Heaven." He took A-jo's sons and grandsons and slew them in sacrifice. Till this day when the Turks perform human sacrifice they use men of the A-jo tribe.

So Shê-mo slew A-jo and in the evening went back to the lake-spirit's daughter. But she told Shê-mo, " With your hand you have slain a man. You stink with the smell of blood. All is over between us."

### 3. *The King of Persia's Daughter.*

The city of Vadiya <sup>34</sup> in Tukhara was built by an ancient king of Persia called Ghushtashp. The first time he built this city, no sooner had he finished it than it fell to pieces. The king sighed over and over again, asking himself, " What sin have I done that Heaven should unmake the city I have built? "

The king had a young daughter called Najek, who seeing that her father was unhappy said to him, " King, have you enemies on your frontiers? " The king shook his head. " I am the king of Persia," he said, " and more than a thousand kingdoms are subject to me. But now I have come to Tukhara and want to build this city, that I may be remembered for ten thousand generations ; but I cannot do it. That is why I am sad." " Do not be sad," she said, " but to-morrow tell your workmen to follow me, and I will show them where to build."

Next morning she rose and walked to the North-East and cut the little finger of her right hand. All day she walked, till the plan of the city was drawn on the ground by the blood that fell from her hand. They built the city where she showed, and this time it did not fall.

Then she turned into a lake-spirit, and the lake she haunted is still there, near to the city walls, its water clear as a mirror. It is a small lake ; you can go all round it by walking five hundred steps.

ARTHUR WALEY

<sup>34</sup> This seems to be a name for Balkh. This is the only known reference in Chinese literature to one of the legendary early Persian kings of the *Shah-nameh* epic.